

# Language Access Plan to Ensure Effective Communication with Multilingual Students and Families

## Section 1: Policy Directives

This section sets forth the laws, standards, and operating principles that will govern the implementation of Yinghua Academy language access plan.

### Policy Foundation

#### Federal

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was enacted as part of the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. It prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.
- Equal Educational Opportunity Act (EEOA) requires states and school districts to provide equal educational opportunity to students learning English by taking appropriate actions to overcome language barriers.
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) upholds language access rights for bilingual families by requiring that students be tested in their home language and Individual Educational Plans (IEP) be written in the appropriate home language. IEP meetings must be conducted in the family's home language using a highly trained and qualified interpreter.

#### State

Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32 states:

- Subd. 1. Language access plan required. Starting in the 2025-2026 school year, during a regularly scheduled public board hearing, a school board must adopt a language access plan that specifies the district's process and procedures to render effective language assistance to students and adults who communicate in a language other than English. The language access plan must be available to the public and included in the school's handbook.
- Subd. 2. Plan requirements. The language access plan must include how the district and its schools will use trained or certified spoken language interpreters for communication related to academic outcomes, progress, determinations, and placement of students in specialized programs and services; and how families and communities will be notified of their rights under this plan.
- Subd. 3. Regular review. The board must review the plan every two years and update the plan as appropriate.
- Minnesota Learning for English Academic Proficiency (LEAPS) Act of 2014, Chapter 272, H.F. No. 2397, Article 1. The law has three principal goals for all English Learner (EL) students: 1) academic English proficiency; 2) grade-level content knowledge; and 3) multilingual skills development.

### Definitions

**American Sign Language (ASL)** – A visually perceived language based on a naturally evolved system of articulated hand gestures and their placement relative to the body, along with non-manual markers

such as facial expressions, head movements, shoulder raises, mouth morphemes, and movements of the body.

**Relay** – Telephone accessibility services to people who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or speech disabled.

**Screen Reader** – Software programs that allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.

**Interpretation** – The act of listening to a communication in one language (source language) and orally converting it to another language (target language). Interpreter must retain the same meaning as the original message without omitting information, summarizing or otherwise altering the message and without adding the interpreter's own thoughts or opinions.

**Interpreter** – A person who provides interpreting services.

**Simultaneous Interpretation Equipment** – Equipment that allow a group of people to listen through headsets to information interpreted into their primary language. This method is most appropriate for large group settings and meetings where multiple languages are being interpreted simultaneously.

**Language Assistance Services** – Oral, expressive, written, and technological supportive services that help students and families communicate effectively with school staff. These services ensure students and families can participate fully in school services, activities, and programs.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP)** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English, including writing, reading, speaking, and listening comprehension. Federal law uses this term to refer to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.

**Emergent Multilingual Speakers** – Individuals whose primary language is not English and who have limited ability to communicate effectively in English but are in the process of developing their English language proficiency. Language access industry leaders and advocates prefer the use of this term when referring to the intended beneficiaries of language access services.

**English Learner (EL)** – A status assigned to students whose primary language is not English, who lacks the necessary skills to understand, speak, read, and write in English but are receiving English language development instructions in a public school or charter setting.

**Home Language** – The language that is most commonly used in the home by members of a family, or the language that parents use when speaking with their children.

**Primary Language** – An individual's native tongue or the language in which an individual most effectively communicates.

**Sight Translation** – The oral interpretation of a written document. This occurs when an interpreter reads a document and then provides a complete oral interpretation of the information that it contains.

**Remote Interpreting** – Interpreting that is provided via telephone or video call.

**Translator** – A person who provides translation services.

**Translation** – The restating of written text from one language (source language) into an equivalent written text in another language (target language).

**Vital Document** – Materials deemed vital to ensuring access to educational services, programs, and activities, or contain information required by law to translate or provide in audio format.

## Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice

Yinghua Academy is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in providing equitable language access services for all students and families. Our practices are guided by the Minnesota Code of Ethics for Educators ([Minnesota Rule 8710.2100](#)) and align with national frameworks such as the NASDTEC Model Code of Ethics for Educators (MCEE) and the National Education Association’s Code of Ethics of the Education Profession.

### Best Practices in Language Access

- **Equity and Inclusion:** All families, regardless of primary language, are entitled to clear, accurate, and respectful communication about their child’s education.
- **Confidentiality:** Interpreters and staff handling translation and interpretation services are expected to maintain strict confidentiality in all interactions.
- **Accuracy and Professionalism:** Translations and interpretations must be linguistically accurate, culturally appropriate, and free of personal bias.
- **Respectful Communication:** Staff and interpreters will treat all students and families with dignity, ensuring that language barriers do not prevent participation in school programs or decision-making.
- **Continuous Improvement:** We will provide training and professional development for staff to strengthen cultural competence and improve communication practices with multilingual families.

### Alignment with National Standards

- Minnesota Code of Ethics for Educators: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/8710.2100/>
- NASDTEC Model Code of Ethics for Educators: [https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE\\_Doc](https://www.nasdtec.net/page/MCEE_Doc)
- NEA Code of Ethics of the Education Profession: <https://www.nea.org/resource-library/code-ethics-education-profession>
- **Minnesota Department of Education (MDE):** [[Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Educational Interpreters of Spoken Language – 8/31/15](#)]. This MDE guidance outlines what interpreters in educational settings should and should not do, along with practical ways to uphold these ethical principles. It is available on the [English Learner Disability Resources](#) webpage.

(Note: This guide is available only in English as it is intended for language access practitioners.)

By integrating these standards into our Language Access Plan, Yinghua Academy ensures that our communication with families reflects integrity, professionalism, and respect, and that language differences never become a barrier to equitable access to education.

## Section 2: The Plan

### Yinghua Academy Language Access Plan Overview

Yinghua Academy is committed to ensuring that all students and families, regardless of their primary language, have equitable access to school programs, services, and information. To uphold this

commitment, the Academy conducts an **annual needs assessment** to evaluate the extent to which language assistance and in-language materials were requested, accessed, or otherwise needed by students, families, and community partners.

### **Purpose**

The needs assessment informs the development of a responsive Language Access Plan that ensures resources are available to meet anticipated needs. By proactively identifying barriers, Yinghua Academy guarantees that effective interpretation and translation services support the full and meaningful participation of families with limited English proficiency (LEP).

The Language Access Plan also provides a blueprint for bringing the school into compliance with state and federal language access requirements. It outlines how the Academy will expand its capacity to meet identified needs through setting priorities, assigning responsibilities, ensuring quality control of services, providing training, and conducting continuous monitoring and evaluation.

## **Language Access Plan**

### **Description of Services**

Yinghua Academy provides both oral and written language assistance services to ensure that families with limited English proficiency (LEP) have full and equitable access to school programs, services, and communications. Oral services include interpreters for enrollment, IEP/504 meetings, parent–teacher conferences, disciplinary proceedings, school events, and on-demand support for urgent or unexpected needs. Written services include translation of vital documents such as enrollment forms, report cards, IEP/504 plans, disciplinary notices, health and safety alerts, and other essential communications. These translations are routinely provided in the school’s most common languages (e.g., Mandarin Chinese, Hmong, Spanish), with additional languages available upon request. All services are provided by qualified professionals, supported by clear staff procedures, and reviewed annually to ensure accuracy, quality, and accessibility.

### **Provision of Language Assistance**

#### **1. Oral Interpretation / Spoken Language Services**

- Yinghua Academy will provide trained or certified interpreters (in-person or remote) for school meetings and communications that significantly affect academic outcomes, such as parent–teacher conferences, IEP/504 meetings, and program placement or exit discussions.
- Interpreter requests should be submitted with at least **5–7 business days’ notice** whenever possible.
- For urgent matters (e.g., discipline hearings, safety issues), interpretation services will be provided even with limited notice.

#### **2. Written Translation of Documents**

- Vital documents—including enrollment forms, permission slips, report cards, program placement notices, disciplinary notices, and parent communications—will be translated into the most common non-English languages represented in the Yinghua community (e.g., Mandarin, Hmong, Spanish, Somali).
- Electronic communications (e.g., email, website content) will be offered in multiple languages when feasible.

- When full translation is not immediately feasible, Yinghua will provide summaries or key extracts in the family's preferred language and indicate that full translation is available upon request.

### **3. Alternate Communication Modalities**

- Provide American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or other accommodations for families who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Offer interpretation for phone calls through bilingual staff or a contracted telephone interpreter service.
- Use technology (e.g., video remote interpreting, translation software) only as a supplement, always paired with the option of a qualified human interpreter/translator.
- All translated written communications will include a notice in English stating that free translation and interpretation services are available upon request.

## **Implementation**

The English Academic Director will serve as the primary contact for families requesting language services, connect them with appropriate resources, and work with the academic team to support students and families needing academic translations. In addition, the English Academic Director will oversee, develop, and update the Language Access Plan, as well as establish the operational procedures for its implementation.

Yinghua Academy will inform families about available language access services prior to conferences and will also share this information on the school website and in the weekly newsletter. Teachers who receive requests for language services should promptly notify the English Academic Director, who will arrange and coordinate the necessary support. After services are provided, the English Academic Director will conduct informal conversations with families to collect feedback, which will be used for data analysis and the ongoing improvement of services.

## **Identification and Assessment of Language Assistance Needs**

### **Processes to Determine Language Needs and Preferences**

Yinghua Academy uses the Minnesota Language Survey, completed by families during enrollment, to identify the home language, preferred language for communication, and the need for translation or interpretation. This information is entered into the student information system and updated as needed. Families may also request language assistance directly through teachers, the English Academic Director, or the Student and Family Liaison.

The Academy provides a range of services to meet these needs, including written translations, oral interpretation (in-person, phone, or video), and sight translation when appropriate. Families are informed about these services prior to parent-teacher conferences and through postings on the school website and weekly newsletter. To remain responsive, Yinghua collaborates with community-based organizations and cultural community groups to better understand the language assistance needs of its families and to ensure services are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

## Processes to Assess Needs by Language Group

Each year, Yinghua Academy reviews the number of students identified as English Learners, the number of families requesting interpretation or translation, and the range of languages spoken in the school community. This annual review helps determine whether interpreter or translation capacity needs to be expanded to support emerging or growing language groups.

Resources needed to provide these services are identified through the annual needs assessment, which informs staffing, contracting, training, and budget requests. The Academy maintains systems for tracking service requests, collecting family feedback, and storing data in the student information system. Coordination with the English Learner (EL) program ensures that data, staffing, and resources are aligned with Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) procedures and best practices.

Through this process, Yinghua Academy ensures that language differences never become a barrier to meaningful family participation or student success.

## Timeline

Yinghua Academy maintains an annual cycle for implementing and updating its Language Access Plan to ensure that services remain effective and responsive to family needs.

- **At Enrollment (Ongoing):** Families complete the Minnesota Language Survey to identify home language, preferred language for communication, and translation/interpretation needs. Data is entered into the student information system for tracking and service planning.
- **Fall (September–October):** Conduct the annual needs assessment by reviewing the number of English Learner (EL) students, languages represented, and service requests from the prior year. Adjust staffing, contracts, and budget allocations as needed. Update the Language Access Plan and share information with staff and families.
- **Throughout the School Year:** Provide interpretation and translation services on an ongoing basis, including for IEP/504 meetings, parent–teacher conferences, disciplinary proceedings, and other school events. Ensure teachers notify the English Academic Director of requests promptly so services can be arranged.
- **Mid-Year (January–February):** Conduct an internal review of service usage and capacity, including feedback from families and staff. Identify any mid-year adjustments needed to interpreter availability, translation priorities, or staff training.
- **End of Year (May–June):** Collect final service data and family feedback, coordinate with the EL program to evaluate outcomes, and document needs for the upcoming year.
- **Annual Benchmark:** By September 30 of each year, Yinghua Academy will finalize updates to the Language Access Plan, publish service information on the school website and newsletter, and ensure staff are trained on procedures for accessing services.

This cycle ensures that the Language Access Plan is a living document, continuously improved through regular review, data analysis, and family input.



## Notice of Services

Yinghua Academy is committed to ensuring that all families are aware of the free language assistance services available to them and know how to request support. To meet this requirement, Yinghua Academy will use multiple methods to advertise and notify students and families:

- **Parent & Student Handbook:** The Language Access Plan, or a summary of it, will be included in the annual Student & Family Handbook in compliance with Minnesota Statutes, section 123B.32. It will also be included in all new-student enrollment packets.
- **School Website:** The full Language Access Plan (or summary) will be published on the Yinghua Academy website under *Current families* → *Parent Resources*.
- **Signage:** Notices in key languages (e.g., English, Mandarin, Spanish, Somali) will be placed at school entrances and front offices to inform families that language assistance is available free of charge.
- **Schoolwide Communications:** When possible, schoolwide announcements, newsletters, and electronic communications will be issued in multiple languages or with links to translations.
- **Parent Meetings and Events:** At parent–teacher conferences, open houses, and Yinghua Academy Community Association meetings, families will be informed of the availability of interpretation and translation services and how to request them. Clear instructions will be provided on whom to contact (e.g., the English Academic Director or the Student and Family Liaison).
- **Staff Training:** Teachers and staff will be trained to direct families who request language services to the appropriate school contact so support can be arranged quickly and effectively.

Through these steps, Yinghua Academy ensures that all families—regardless of language background—receive timely, clear, and accessible notice of the language services available to them.

## Training for Staff

Yinghua Academy will provide training for all staff—especially those who interact directly with families, including teachers, administrative staff, counselors, and support staff—on when and how to request interpreters or translators and on culturally responsive communication practices.

### Training Components

- **Policies & Procedures:** Staff will be trained on Yinghua’s Language Access Plan, including the timelines, contacts, and procedures for placing interpreter and translation requests.
- **Roles & Responsibilities:** Key roles will be identified and reviewed during training, including the English Academic Director (primary contact for language services), the Student and Family Liaison, the Registrar, Chinese Academic Directors, and Special Education Director.
- **Practical Guidance:** Staff will learn how to identify when interpretation or translation is required, how to request services, and how to communicate effectively with multilingual families.
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Training will include strategies for respectful and inclusive communication that builds trust with families from diverse backgrounds.

## Delivery of Training

- **Annual Training:** All staff will participate in yearly training sessions as part of professional development.
- **New Staff Onboarding:** Orientation for new staff will include an overview of language access policies, procedures, and resources.
- **Refresher Sessions:** Additional training will be provided throughout the year as needed, based on feedback from staff and families or updates to the Language Access Plan.

Through these efforts, Yinghua Academy ensures that all staff are prepared to support equitable access for multilingual families and to uphold the commitments outlined in the Language Access Plan.

### **Plan Maintenance**

Yinghua Academy is committed to ensuring that its Language Access Plan remains current, effective, and responsive to the needs of students and families. The Academy will monitor the implementation of services, collect data, and review policies and procedures on a regular basis.

#### **Monitoring and Data Collection**

- Collect annual data on interpreter and translation requests, including the number of requests, languages requested, turnaround times, unmet needs, and family satisfaction.
- Track the use of oral interpretation (in-person, phone, or video) and written translations, as well as the frequency of services provided in each language group.

#### **Family Feedback**

- Hold informal feedback conversations after language services are provided to ensure family voices inform service quality and improvement.

#### **Review and Revision**

- Use collected data and feedback to identify service gaps, such as unserved languages, delays in service, or quality concerns.
- Present a formal Language Access Plan performance report to the Yinghua Academy Board every two years, including recommendations for revisions.
- Revise the plan, policies, and procedures as needed to improve responsiveness, accuracy, and accessibility.

Through this ongoing monitoring and review process, Yinghua Academy ensures that language access services are consistently meeting the needs of multilingual families and are aligned with state and federal requirements.

### **Community Engagement and Partnership**

Yinghua Academy recognizes that effective language access services require collaboration not only within the school but also with the wider community. To support multilingual families, the Academy will work with community-based organizations, cultural associations, and local partners who serve emergent multilingual speakers, including religious organizations, immigrant service agencies, and parent networks. These partnerships help ensure that families are aware of the services available and feel supported in accessing them.

#### **Community Outreach**

- Provide clear information about language assistance services during school-sponsored events such as open houses, parent-teacher conferences, and cultural celebrations.



- Share information with community partners to extend outreach beyond the school, ensuring immigrant and multilingual families know that services are free and available.
- Collaborate with cultural and immigrant-serving organizations to stay informed about changing community needs, new language groups, and best practices in service delivery.

### **Feedback and Continuous Improvement**

- Gather input from families through focus groups, and informal conversations conducted in multiple languages.
- Engage the Yinghua Academy Community Association and other family leadership groups to review language access services and recommend improvements.
- Incorporate community and family feedback into the annual needs assessment and biannual Board report on Language Access Plan performance.

By maintaining these partnerships and creating intentional opportunities for family input, Yinghua Academy ensures that its Language Access Plan remains responsive, culturally appropriate, and grounded in the lived experiences of the community it serves.

### **Emergency Communication Protocol**

In the event of an emergency, Yinghua Academy will ensure that all families, including those with limited English proficiency (LEP), receive timely, accurate, and understandable information.

Emergencies may include severe weather, safety threats, transportation disruptions, federal immigration enforcement activities, or public health announcements.

#### **Communication Methods**

- **Mass Notification System:** Yinghua Academy will use phone calls, text messages, and emails to communicate urgent information. Messages will be sent in English and the most common languages represented in the school community (e.g., Mandarin, Hmong, Spanish, Somali).
- **Translation Tools:** When immediate translation is needed, the Academy may use AI-based translation applications such as TalkingPoints, Google Translate, or other secure platforms, supplemented with human review when possible to ensure accuracy.
- **Phone Applications:** Tools such as TalkingPoints, WhatsApp, and Infinite Campus Messenger will be used to push notifications directly to parents in their preferred language.
- **Website and Social Media:** Emergency updates will be posted on the school website and official social media accounts, with multilingual versions provided when feasible.

#### **Procedures**

- Maintain updated family contact information in the student information system to ensure accurate delivery of emergency messages.
- Provide families, at enrollment and annually, with information on how emergency alerts will be communicated and in which formats.
- Designate the English Academic Director to oversee translation and dissemination of emergency communications.
- Ensure that emergency messages are concise, clear, and include instructions for next steps (e.g., school closures, shelter-in-building, pick-up locations).

By combining mass communication tools, translation technology, and staff oversight, Yinghua Academy will provide prompt and effective emergency communication to all families, ensuring that no family is left without critical information due to language barriers.

## Artificial Intelligence (AI) Translation Services

Yinghua Academy may use AI-based translation tools to supplement human translation and interpretation services. AI translation is most commonly used for:

- **General communications** such as school newsletters, flyers, and announcements to families.
- **Electronic messages** including emails, text messages, and app-based notifications (e.g., TalkingPoints, WhatsApp).
- **Quick turnaround needs** when immediate communication is required, such as scheduling updates, reminders, or non-critical notices.

### Limitations and Safeguards

- AI-generated translations are used only as a support tool and do not replace qualified human translators for vital documents (e.g., enrollment forms, IEPs, discipline notices, health/safety alerts).
- All AI-translated materials will include a **call-back number** for the school office so families can reach a designated staff member (e.g., English Academic Director or Student and Family Liaison) if they have questions or need clarification.
- Staff are trained to review AI-translated materials for clarity and to ensure that sensitive information is translated by a qualified professional.

Through this approach, Yinghua Academy leverages AI tools for efficiency while maintaining accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and accountability to families.

## Section 3: Procedures

### Overview

This section sets forth guidelines and steps for staff to coordinate, gather data, and deliver uniform services to students, families, and community members.

### Procedures

#### Quick Reference Guide: Language Assistance Procedures

##### Step 1: Identify the Need

- Family/student requests help in another language **OR** staff identify a communication barrier.
- Use the **Minnesota Language Survey** (enrollment data) or **Language ID poster/cards** to confirm the language.

##### Step 2: Notify the Contact

- **Contact the English Academic Director** (Primary Coordinator).
- For urgent or unexpected needs, notify immediately via phone or email.

##### Step 3: Choose the Service Type

- **Oral/Spoken Interpretation**
  - IEP/504 meetings, parent-teacher conferences, disciplinary hearings → Arrange a professional interpreter (in-person or remote).
  - Urgent issues (safety/discipline) → Use phone/video interpretation line.
- **Written Translation**

- Vital documents (enrollment forms, report cards, health/safety alerts, IEPs, discipline notices) → Send request to English Academic Director for professional translation.
- Newsletters/flyers → May use AI-assisted translation, but must include callback number for clarification.

#### **Step 4: Service Delivery**

- Ensure the family is introduced to the interpreter/translator.
- Verify the family understands that services are **free of charge**.

#### **Step 5: After the Service**

- Teacher or staff documents the service (date, type, language).
- English Academic Director reviews logs to track requests.
- Family feedback collected informally or via survey.

#### **Special Notes**

- **Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deafblind families** → Request ASL interpreter or CART captioning.
- **Bilingual Staff** → May help with day-to-day communication, but not formal interpretation for IEPs, discipline, or legal/sensitive issues.

### **Contact Information**

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### **Additional Resources**

- [Minnesota Department of Education – Language Access Plan Guidance](#)
- [Minnesota Code of Ethics for Educators \(Minn. Rule 8710.2100\)](#)